

Message Text

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GENEVA MOSCOW USLOSACLANT NORFOLK USNMR SHAPE JAN 28, 1978
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S E C R E T USNATO 00943

E.O. 11652: XGDS1
TAGS: PARM, NATO, MNUC, NAC
SUBJECT: NAC MEETING JANUARY 27 ON BREZHNEV LETTERS ON
ER WEAPON

REF: STATE 22180 (NOTAL) AND PREVIOUS

SUMMARY: AT PRIVATE NAC MEETING JANUARY 27, COUNCIL
TOOK UP QUESTIDN OF REPLIES TO BREZHNEV LETTERS ON RB-ER
WEAPON. CONCLUSION WAS THAT CONSULTATIONS ON REPLIES
WERE IMPORTANT, BUT THAT REPLIES NEED NOT BE UNIFORM.
LUNS STRESSED THAT MEETING WAS TO MARSHALL ARGUMENTS
RATHER THAN TO COORDINATE REPLIES THEMSELVES. END SUMMARY.

1. LUNS SAID THAT THE IS DOCUMENT C-M(78)4 (USNATO
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860, NOTAL),COMPARING THE SEVERAL BREZHNEV LETTERS TO
ALLIED HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT CONCERNING THE
ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON,WOULD BE AMENDED TO INCOR-
PORATE MATERIAL RELATING TO THE LETTER TO PRESIDENT
CARTER, NOW THAT THE IS HAD RECEIVED THE TEXT OF THE
LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER.

2. LUNS DID NOT SEE AS THE COUNCIL'S PURPOSE COORDINA-
TION OF REPLIES TO THE BREZHNEV LETTERS, BUT RATHER
MARSHALLING OF ARGUMENTS TO USE AGAINST ALLEGATIONS THAT

THE RB-ER WEAPON IS INHUMANE, A NEW STEP IN ARMS BUILDUP, A WEAPON WHICH INCREASES THREAT OF NUCLEAR WAR, AND ONE WHICH WILL NOT BE RESTRICTED TO MILITARY TARGETS. LUNS CIRCULATED THE FOLLOWING INFORMAL DRAFT OF ARGUMENTS TO PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES:

BEGIN TEXT:

AS A BASIS FOR DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL ON FRIDAY, 27TH JANUARY, 1978, I HAVE PREPARED IN INFORMAL DRAFT THE FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS ONE MIGHT WISH TO USE IN COUNTERING SOVIET ASSERTIONS ABOUT THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON:

(1) THE ENHANCED RADIATION WEAPON IS NO MORE INHUMANE THAN OTHER WEAPONS OF WAR, ESPECIALLY ALREADY EXISTING NUCLEAR WEAPONS. IT IS MOST CERTAINLY NOT A WEAPON OF MASS DESTRUCTION. ON THE CONTRARY, THE ERW IS DESIGNED TO DO FAR LESS COLLATERAL DAMAGE THAN EXISTING TACTICAL, NOT TO MENTION STRATEGIC, NUCLEAR WEAPONS. GIVEN ITS PARTICULAR CHARACTERISTICS, IT POSES MUCH LESS DANGER TO NON-MILITARY TARGETS AND TO CIVILIANS.

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(2) DEVELOPMENT OF THE ERW HAS BEEN UNDERWAY FOR A LONG TIME. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WEAPON ARE NOT SUCH AS TO CONSTITUTE AN ESCALATORY STEP IN THE ARMS RACE. THE ERW IS A DEFENSIVE WEAPON, DESIGNED FOR USE AGAINST ATTACKING ARMoured FORCES. THE ENHANCED RADIATION GENERATED BY THE WEAPON MAKES IT ESPECIALLY EFFECTIVE AGAINST ENEMY TROOPS IN STEEL VEHICLES WHICH ARE PARTICULARLY VULNERABLE TO RADIATION. GIVEN THE SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS AND DEFENSIVE MISSIONS OF THE ERW, THERE IS NO BASIS FOR SUGGESTING THAT ITS USE WOULD NOT BE LIMITED TO MILITARY TARGETS.

(3) IN LIGHT OF THE ALARMING BUILD-UP OF WARSAW PACT FORCES, AND ESPECIALLY THE SUPERIORITY DEVELOPED IN ARMOUR, IT IS NEITHER INHUMANE NOR ESCALATORY BUT PERFECTLY REASONABLE FOR THE ALLIANCE TO CONSIDER WEAPONS WHICH WOULD AFFORD MORE EFFECTIVE PROTECTION AGAINST A POSSIBLE ARMoured ATTACK.

(4) THERE IS NO BASIS FOR THE CHARGE THAT THE ERW WOULD INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD OF NUCLEAR WAR. IT HAS BEEN WELL-KNOWN FOR MANY YEARS THAT NATO RELIES ON BOTH NUCLEAR AND CONVENTIONAL FORCES TO DETER AN AGGRESSOR. TO THE EXTENT THAT THE ERW ENHANCES THE CREDIBILITY OF OUR DETERRENT, ITS INTRODUCTION WOULD MAKE AGGRESSION LESS LIKELY AND THUS LESSEN, RATHER THAN INCREASE, THE DANGER OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS USE.

(5) NEITHER IS THERE ANY BASIS FOR THE ASSERTION THAT INTRODUCTION OF THE ERW WOULD CHANGE THE SYSTEM NOW IN USE FOR CONTROL OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN SUCH A WAY AS TO LOWER THE NUCLEAR THRESHOLD: A DECISION TO USE THE ERW WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE SAME PROCEDURES AND CONTROLS WHICH APPLY TO ANY NUCLEAR WEAPON; HENCE, ESCALATION WOULD BE AS CAREFULLY CONTROLLED WITH THE EXISTENCE OF THE ERW AS WITHOUT IT.

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(6) THERE IS A GLARING CONTRAST BETWEEN UNFOUNDED SOVIET ASSERTIONS CONCERNING A DEFENSIVE WEAPON, THE PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT OF WHICH STILL AWAIT DECISION, AND THE SOVIET FAIT ACCOMPLI IN DEPLOYING A NEW GENERATION OF SS-20 MOBILE, MULTIHEADED MISSILES TARGETED ON ALL OF EUROPE WITH A "DIRTY" NUCLEAR CHARGE POTENTIALLY A THOUSAND TIMES LARGER THAN THE ERW.

(7) IT IS THE RIGHT AND DUTY OF A COUNTRY OR AN ALLIANCE TO CONSIDER HOW TO DEFEND ITSELF MOST EFFECTIVELY AGAINST A PERCEIVED THREAT TO ITS SECURITY. WE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO DENY THIS RIGHT TO OTHERS AND MUST REJECT CRUDE EFFORTS TO INTERFERE IN WESTERN CONSIDERATIONS OF THE TYPE OF WEAPONS WHICH WOULD BEST SERVE TO ENHANCE OUR COLLECTIVE SECURITY.

END TEXT.

3. FRG CHARGE BOSS REPORTED NEWS FROM BELGRADE THAT TITO HAS RECEIVED A LETTER FROM BREZHNEV ON THE RB-ER. BOSS CONTINUED THAT BONN IS INTENDING TO ANSWER ITS LETTER FROM BREZHNEV. BOSS SAID THAT THE FRG WELCOMED THIS CONSULTATION BECAUSE IT WOULD LIKE TO FIND IDENTITY OF ARGUMENTS TO USE IN REPLY. BOSS THEN SET FORTH THE FOLLOWING ARGUMENTS WHICH, AS DID THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S INFORMAL DRAFT, INCLUDED REFERENCE TO THE SS-20:

BEGIN TEXT:

IN OUR VIEW A REPLY TO BREZHNEV'S LETTER SHOULD CONTAIN THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS:

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(1) OUR CONCERNS ABOUT THE THREATENING SOVIET MILITARY BUILD-UP WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE SS-20.

(2) A REAFFIRMATION THAT THE ALLIANCE ONLY SERVES THE PURPOSE OF DEFENSE AND HAS TO MAKE ITS DECISIONS

ACCORDING TO ITS OWN SECURITY INTERESTS.

(3) EMPHASIS ON THE COHESION OF THE ALLIANCE AND REJECTION OF ANY ATTEMPT OF INTERFERENCE. REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT THE SECURITY OF ALLIED COUNTRIES IS GUARANTEED BY THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN THE ALLIANCE AND BY THE SOLIDARITY OF THIS ALLIANCE.

(4) REAFFIRMATION OF ALLIED INTEREST IN ARMS CONTROL, STATEMENT OF ALLIED EFFORTS IN THIS FIELD AND OF THE CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION OF ALLIED COUNTRIES TO INTERNATIONAL DETENTE.

(5) A CLEAR STATEMENT, REJECTING THE ASSERTION THAT THE ERW IS A NEW MASS DESTRUCTION WEAPON.

END TEXT.

4. LUNS APPLAUDED THE FRG'S ARGUMENTS AND ASKED IF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE, GENERAL ZEINER GUNDERSON (NORWAY) CARED TO SPEAK.

5. ZEINER GUNDERSON THEN REPEATED FORCEFULLY HIS COMMITTEE'S VIEWS THAT NATO NEEDS THE RB-ER WARHEAD. UNDERLINING THIS WARHEAD'S EFFECTIVENESS AGAINST ARMOR, HE SAID IT WOULD LIMIT THE PRINCIPAL ADVANTAGE ENJOYED BY THE SOVIETS. ZEINER GUNDERSON SAID SOVIET PROTESTS REFLECT SOVIET CONCERN IN THIS REGARD. HE CONCLUDED THAT NATO SHOULD NOT ACCEPT THE SOVIET EFFORT TO SEE NATO DENIED THE WARHEAD.

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6. CHARGE JESSEL OF FRANCE NOTED THAT FRANCE HAD INFORMED THE SPC ABOUT ITS LETTER FROM BREZHNEV AS WELL AS ABOUT ITS REPLY TO BREZHNEV, AND HAD PARTICIPATED IN NATO'S ANALYSIS OF THE BREZHNEV TEXTS. JESSEL CONSIDERED IT QUITE LOGICAL FOR FRANCE TO HAVE DONE SO AND SAID FRANCE WAS LISTENING WITH MUCH INTEREST TO THE DISCUSSION REGARDING THE LETTERS. WHEN LUNS ASKED IF FRANCE WOULD PUBLISH ITS REPLY, JESSEL SAID HE HAD NO INFORMATION, BUT SAID THE PRINCIPAL POINTS OF THE REPLY HAD BEEN GIVEN THE SPC.

7. AMBASSADOR KIRCA OF TURKEY SAID HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT ALLIES SHOULD ARGUE WITH THE SOVIETS IN THEIR REPLIES. HE THOUGHT THAT REPLIES SHOULD FOCUS ON THE SOVIET ONUS FOR HAVING CREATED IMBALANCE AND THE NEED FOR ARMS LIMITATION NEGOTIATIONS.

8. SECRETARY GENERAL LUNS THEN SAID HE MIGHT MAKE MORE PRECISE THAT THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING WAS TO MARSHAL ARGUMENTS WHICH MIGHT BE MADE IN REPLY, NOT

TO SETTLE ON A FORM OF REPLY.

9. AMBASSADOR BENNETT SAW NO POINT IN TAKING UP THE TIME OF THE COUNCIL WITH FURTHER DETAILED ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER TO PRESIDENT CARTER. U.S. VIEWS ALREADY HAD BEEN MADE KNOWN IN THE SPC. BENNETT CONSIDERED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD DRAFTED THEIR LETTERS WITH A VIEW TO PUBLICATION. HE THOUGHT BOTH OUR SEPARATE NATIONAL AND OUR COLLECTIVE HANDLING OF THE RB-ER ISSUE HAS BEEN SUCH AS TO LEND WEIGHT TO THE RECENT COMMENT IN THE "FRANKFURTER ALGEMEINE ZEITUNG" THAT NATO ATTITUDES HAVE BEEN SUCH THAT THEY HAVE "TEMPTED" THE SOVIETS TO SECRET

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PURSUED THEIR CAMPAIGN. BENNETT EMPHASIZED THAT WASHINGTON SAW NO URGENCY IN NEED TO REPLY. THE U.S. WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE FURTHER CONSULTATION REGARDING RESPONSE AND WOULD LIKE TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF ALLIED VIEWS ON RB-ER ITSELF. THE U.S. SAW ADVANTAGES IN COMMON POSITIONS.

10. AMBASSADOR HARDY OF CANADA TOOK FULL NOTE OF THE LIST OF ARGUMENTS CIRCULATED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL, ADDING THAT CANADA, VERY MUCH IN THE SPIRIT OF THE TURKISH AMBASSADOR'S INTERVENTION, BELIEVED THAT REPLIES SHOULD BE LIMITED TO EXPRESSIONS OF DISAPPOINTMENT OVER THE RAPID BUILD-UP OF SOVIET FORCES WHICH HAD BROUGHT ABOUT NEED FOR RESPONSE IN THE FORM OF DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEUTRON WEAPON. HARDY CONTINUED THAT EMPHASIS SHOULD BE PUT ON THE URGENT IMPORTANCE OF ARMS CONTROL WITH SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO THE SS-20. HARDY CONSIDERED LONG-RUN ARGUMENTS THE MOST USEFUL. HE SAID THAT BECAUSE OF THE PUBLICITY ATTENDANT TO THE BREZHNEV LETTERS, CAREFUL REPLIES WERE IN ORDER, ALTHOUGH CANADA SAW NO NEED TO CONCENTRATE IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE REPLIES. HARDY COMMENTED THAT, AS TO TIMING, CANADA'S POSITION ON TIMING OF REPLY WAS A BIT AT VARIANCE WITH THAT EXPRESSED BY THE U.S.; CANADA BELIEVED THAT DELAY IN REPLY COULD GIVE THE BREZHNEV LETTER MORE WEIGHT THAN IT DESERVED.

11. THE SECRETARY GENERAL THEN INTERVENED TO STRESS THAT HE COULD SEE A "WELL-ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN" AGAINST THE RB-ER WEAPON. THE SOVIETS WERE DIRECTING THIS CAMPAIGN, WHICH WAS EMPLOYING NUMEROUS LEFT-WING, FELLOW-TRAVELLING GROUPS IN NATO COUNTRIES.

12. CHARGE BOSS OF THE FRG, NOTING THE TURKISH AND CANADIAN INTERVENTIONS, EMPHASIZED THAT THE FRG'S POINTS FOR USE IN REPLY TO BREZHNEV INCLUDED REAFFIRMATION OF SECRET

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ALLIED INTEREST IN ARMS CONTROL.

13. CHARGE GAARDER OF NORWAY SAID HIS AUTHORITIES SHARED THE VIEW THAT BREZHNEV LETTERS WERE AN ATTEMPT TO INFLUENCE AND EXPLOIT WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION. HE WOULD TRANSMIT TO OSLO THE ARGUMENTS SET FORTH AT THE MEETING. HE BELIEVED REPLIES MIGHT STATE THAT IN THE "NEXT ROUND" OF DISARMAMENT TALKS, TACTICAL WEAPONS INCLUDING THE SS-20 SHOULD BE INCLUDED. THIS WOULD CONSTITUTE A CONSTRUCTIVE ANSWER AND WOULD TEST SOVIET INTENTIONS. HE EXPRESSED SUPPORT FOR CONSULTATION AND NON-IDENTICAL REPLIES.

14. AMBASSADOR BENNETT EXPRESSED AGREEMENT WITH THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE MILITARY COMMITTEE, AND ADDED THAT HE WANTED TO POINT OUT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER IN HIS WARSAW PRESS CONFERENCE HAD MADE SPECIFIC MENTION OF THE SS-20. HE READ TO THE COUNCIL THE PERTINENT EXCERPT:

BEGIN TEXT:

. . . THIS WEAPON (RB-ER) IS MUCH LESS DESTABILIZING IN ITS EFFECT, IF IT SHOULD BE DEPLOYED, THAN, FOR INSTANCE, SOME OF THE ADVANCED NEW SOVIET WEAPONS, LIKE THE SS-20 MISSILE, WHICH IS MUCH MORE DESTRUCTIVE THAN ANY WEAPON HELD BY THE NATO ALLIES AND HAS A MUCH GREATER RANGE . . .

END TEXT.

15. THE DEAN (AMBASSADOR CATALANO OF ITALY) CONSIDERED THE NAC MEETING TO HAVE BEEN "MOST USEFUL". HE SUPPORTED THE CONCEPT OF FULL CONSULTATIONS WITHOUT IDENTICAL
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REPLIES AND TOOK SPECIAL NOTE OF THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY TURKEY'S AMBASSADOR.

16. CHARGE HOLMER OF THE UK SAID HIS DELEGATION HAD NO INDICATION OF PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN'S INTENTIONS REGARDING A REPLY TO BREZHNEV. HOLMER ASSURED THE COUNCIL, HOWEVER, THAT ITS VIEWS REGARDING REPLIES WOULD BE CONSIDERED VERY CAREFULLY IN LONDON.

17. CHARGE BOSS OF THE FRG NOTED NORWAY'S INTERVENTION AND CONSIDERED THAT IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS TO INVITE EXCHANGE WITH THE SOVIETS ON A MATTER SUCH AS FORWARD-BASING OF RB-ER WEAPONS SINCE NO DECISION ON FORWARD-BASING HAD BEEN TAKEN IN THE ALLIANCE.

18. CHARGE TILLISCH OF DENMARK CONSIDERED THAT REPLIES TO BREZHNEV SHOULD BE ALONG SIMILAR LINES BUT NOT IDENTICAL.

19. CHARGE BIEGMAN OF THE NETHERLANDS SAID THE HAGUE VALUED CONSULTATION ON QUESTION OF REPLIES; SO FAR NO INSTRUCTIONS HAD BEEN RECEIVED. HOWEVER, HE BELIEVED THE LINE OF REPLY SET OUT BY CANADA WOULD BE FOLLOWED BY THE NETHERLANDS.

20. THE SECRETARY GENERAL, BEFORE CONCLUDING DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT, TOOK UP THE LANGUAGE TO BE USED BY THE NATO SPOKESMAN ON AN "IF ASKED" BASIS ABOUT ALLIED REPLIES TO THE BREZHNEV LETTERS. LUNS PROPOSED THAT THE SPOKESMAN SAY SIMPLY: "NATO HAS HAD A DISCUSSION AND ANY FURTHER ACTION REMAINS WITH NATIONAL GOVERNMENTS." THERE WERE NO OBJECTIONS TO THIS PROPOSAL.

21. COMMENT: MEETING POINTED TO INCLINATION OF SOME ALLIES TO RESPOND SOON TO BREZHNEV LETTER. THEREFORE, IF WASHINGTON WISHES TO PROVIDE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS
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RELEVANT TO ALLIED REPLIES, THESE SHOULD BE CONVEYED PROMPTLY. END COMMENT. BENNETT UNQUOTE VANCE

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